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FORMER NO. 2 CIA OFFICIAL SUPPORTS REFORM MEASURE
BY NEIL ROLAND

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WASHINGTON (UPI) — The CIA's former No. 2 official, opposing the administration's position, endorses a proposed reform requiring the agency to notify Congress of all spy operations within 48 hours, Senate Intelligence Committee sources say.

Ex-deputy CIA chief John McMahon planned to make his position public today at a committee hearing where Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci also was scheduled to appear, the sources said.

McMahon already has privately expressed his opposition to the administration's view that the president should be allowed to withhold information under unusual circumstances, committee sources said Tuesday.

The testimony of McMahon, who served as deputy to former CIA director William Casey, is likely to be especially influential because he is esteemed by Congress as a pre-eminent intelligence authority who speaks for agency professionals, the panel sources said.

In a Dec. 1 letter to the Senate committee, McMahon supported the 48-hour requirement on grounds that it would "protect CIA interests" by "allaying congressional mistrust of the agency," panel sources said.

McMahon, who clashed often with Casey over the director's freewheeling approach to operations, responded angrily when he learned in November 1985 that the CIA had assisted an arms sale to Iran without the required written presidential authorization or notification of Congress.

He resigned soon afterward, ending an agency career that spanned more than 20 years.

The administration has argued before the Senate panel that proposals requiring presidential notification are unconstitutional because they pre-empt the president's foreign policy prerogatives and restrict his flexibility.

President Reagan issued a secret executive order earlier this fall permitting the administration to withhold information about spy activities from Congress under unusual circumstances, White House and congressional sources said.

Both the Senate and House intelligence committees have proposed bills that would require the president to notify eight congressional leaders of all covert activities in advance or, in special circumstances, within 48 hours of the start of the operations.

The proposals are intended to prevent the recurrence of actions taken by Reagan in 1986 to withhold information about the Iran arms sales from Congress.